

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-10

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ADP-00 EURE-00 NSC-10 NSCE-00 CIAE-00

INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 L-02 PM-03 DODE-00 PRS-01

MBFR-02 SAJ-01 IO-03 RSR-01 NEA-06 /065 W
----- 100884

P R 151242 Z JUN 73

FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5717

SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN PRIORITY

INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

AMEMBASSY ROME

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS PRIORITY

USDEL SALT

AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY VIENNA

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 BONN 08551

LIMDIS POLICY

COPENHAGEN ALSO FOR SECRETARY' S PARTY; HELSINKI FOR MPT

DEL; VIENNA FOR MBFR DEL

E. O. 11652: X- GDS-1

TAGS: MCAP, US, GW, NATO

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SUBJECT: GERMAN CONCERN OVER WASHPOST ARTICLE AND SCHLESINGER DPC STATEMENT.

SUMMARY: GERMAN DEFENSE MINISTER AND STATE SECRETARY HAVE INDICATED TO US THEIR SERIOUS CONCERN OVER WASHPOST ARTICLE AND SECDEF- DESIGNATE SCHLESINGER STATEMENT ON CONVENTIONAL BALANCE IN EUROPE. GIVEN THIS CONCERN AND INTENSE PRESS SPECULATION ABOUT US PURPOSES, THESE OFFICIALS HAVE REQUESTED EARLY US PUBLIC STATEMENT OF CLARIFICATION. ACTION REQUESTED: WE RECOMMEND THAT USG ISSUE SUCH A STATEMENT. END SUMMARY.

1. DURING JUNE 14 MEETING WITH VISITING FORMER USNATO AMBASSADOR ELLSWORTH AND EMBOFF, DEFMIN STATE SECRETARY BERKHAN EXPRESSED STRONG GERMAN CONCERN OVER DPC STATEMENT BY SECDEF- DESIGNATE SCHLESINGER TO THE EFFECT THAT EAST/ WEST CONVENTIONAL BALANCE IN EUROPE DID NOT FAVOR WARSAW PACT. BERKHAN SAID THAT SCHLESINGER STATEMENT, COMING AFTER GETLER ARTICLE IN JUNE 7 WASHPOST AND CONSIDERED TOGETHER WITH BROAD INTERNATIONAL PRESS COVERAGE OF US DPC STATEMENT, WAS SOURCE OF DISMAY BOTH IN BONN AND IN OTHER ALLIED CAPITALS. NOTING SALZBERGER ARTICLE IN JUNE 13 INT HERALD TRIBUNE AND INTENSE, NEGATIVE GERMAN PRESS COMMENTARY, BERKHAN SAID SUCH A US POSITION COULD ONLY HAVE THE EFFECT OF STRENGTHENING MANSFIELD FORCES IN THE US CONGRESS AND CRITICS OF DEFENSE SPENDING IN EUROPEAN PARLIAMENTS. TALK OF EAST/ WEST CONVENTIONAL BALANCE IN EUROPE ALSO WOULD, CONTINUED BERKHAN, ERODE WESTERN BARGAINING POSITION IN MBFR. IN THESE CIRCUMSTANCES, BERKHAN EXPRESSED HOPE THAT POST ARTICLE ON PENTAGON STUDY WAS INACCURATE. (ON MBFR, SEE ALSO BONN 8487 PARA 8.)

2. IN REPLY, EMBOFF STATED THAT DOD AND OTHER US AGENCIES ARE AT PRESENT AS IN THE PAST CONSTANTLY CONDUCTING STUDIES ON ALL ASPECTS OF US SECURITY. BUT EMBOFF ADDED THAT GETLER ARTICLE INACCURATE SINCE PENTAGON MUCH LESS USG HAS NOT CONCLUDED STUDY DRAWING SUCH CONCLUSIONS REGARDING EAST/ WEST CONVENTIONAL BALANCE. IN THIS CONNECTION, EMBOFF ALSO RECALLED SCHLESINGER'S REAFFIRMATION AT DPC OF FLEXIBLE

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ACTION EUR-10

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ADP-00 EURE-00 NSC-10 NSCE-00 CIAE-00

INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 L-02 PM-03 DODE-00 PRS-01

MBFR-02 SAJ-01 IO-03 RSR-01 /059 W
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P R 151242 Z JUN 73
FM AMEMBASSY BONN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5718
SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN PRIORITY
INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA
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S E C R E T SECTION 02 OF 02 BONN 08551

LIMDIS

RESPONSE/ FORWARD DEFENSE POLICY.

3. BERKHAN STRONGLY WELCOMED EMBOFF' S REPLY,
REITERATING FRANK CONCERN WHICH EMERGED AT THE HIGHEST
LEVELS OF THE GERMAN GOVERNMENT AFTER SCHLESINGER' S
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STATEMENT AT DPC MINISTERIAL. BERKHAN THEN ASKED US TO COMMUNICATE TO WASHINGTON THE GERMAN VIEW THAT A CLEAR CUT US PUBLIC STATEMENT DISAVOWING SUBSTANCE OF WASHPOST ARTICLE WOULD BE VERY HELPFUL IN CLEARING THE AIR IN BONN AND OTHER ALLIED CAPITALS, PARTICULARLY GIVEN WIDESPREAD AND PERSISTING PRESS COMMENTARY.

4. DEFMIN CHIEF FOR MILITARY POLICY AND PLANS (TREBESCH) CONTACTED EMBOFF JUNE 15, AFTER TREBESCH AND BERKHAN HAD BRIEFED DEFMIN LEBER ON ELLSWORTH VISIT. TREBESCH PASSED ON LEBER' S ENDORSEMENT OF BERKHAN REQUEST.

5. COMMENT: IT IS CLEAR THAT CONJUNCTION OF POST ARTICLE AND US DPC STATEMENT HAS CAUSED CONSIDERABLE CONCERN IN GERMAN AND OTHER ALLIED GOVERNMENTS. WE WILL BE REPORTING IN FURTHER DETAIL ON OTHER HIGH LEVEL CONVERSATIONS WE HAVE HAD ON THIS SUBJECT IN THE LAST FEW DAYS. IT WOULD BE EXTREMELY HELPFUL IF USG COULD MAKE THE TYPE OF PUBLIC STATEMENT REQUESTED BY GERMAN DEFENSE MINISTER AND STATE SECRETARY. HILLENBRAND

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*** Current Classification *** SECRET

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TAGS: MCAP, GW, US, NATO
To: ANKARA
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BRUSSELS
COPENHAGEN
EUR
LISBON
SECSTATE WASHDC

THE HAGUE

WASHDC

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